OUR LITERARY BUDGET.

CONTRIBUTION FROM THE FIELD OF LITERATURE.

The Poetry of Mr. Lewis Morris—A Vision of Saints, an Epic of Christianity, a Great and Ambitious Poem—Dr. Samuel Johnson the Jupiter of English Letters in the Eighteenth Century.

After a period of silence, in an hour all too barren of poetry, the voice of Mr. Lewis Morris has been heard again. "A Vision of Saints," his later-day epic of Christianity, is among the largest and most ambitious poems published during the last few years. With the exception of "The Epic of Hades," it is much the most conspicuous piece of work that Mr. Lewis Morris has given us; and we are not, we think, taking too much for granted if we conclude that upon these two poems their author would himself base any claim he might possess to a lasting appreciation. It is not, therefore, without interest at the moment to take a short estimate of the value of Mr. Lewis Morris' work.

His first published poem appeared in 1859, and thereafter for thirteen years he gave no work to the general public. His poetry, therefore, cannot be accused of precocity; perhaps of all English poets he developed latest in life. His voice is no midnight sob of

An infant crying in the night,

but the ripe, full song of maturity, as it moves across its harvest field of life.

The poetry of maturity is naturally approached by criticism in a spirit different from that with which it would encounter the first essays of boyhood. In the poetry of extreme youth we expect a certain amount of imitation, both in manner and matter. The views of the author are as yet undeveloped; they are the result rather of study than experience, and admiration of a single author leads to a wholesale adoption of his thought and language. It is through this period of imitation that the perfection of originality is gradually evolved. But when the poet has gained an experience, his verse should gain in maturity; we may then fairly expect that the ideas he suggests will no longer be the ideas of the master at whose feet he sat as a boy, that he will have constructed for himself an individual style and an independent philosophy of life, affording us fresh material of thought, the creation of his own powerful personality.

Any just estimate, however, of the poetry of Mr. Lewis Morris cannot overlook the fact that, in many cases, whole poems in his volumes are indebted for their leading ideas to the works of other writers. To Tom Hood, to Tennyson, to Arthur Hugh Clough, Mr. Morris owes a good deal more than a passing inspiration. Mr. Morris' "Two Voyages" is an almost exact repetition of one of the best-known poems of Clough.

Wordsworth, seeking repose from the unrestful revolution of Shelley, found in "the untilled aspect of the fields" a fruitful source of inspiration, and delighted to draw from the simplest wayside flower "thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears." Mr. Lewis Morris, turning from the day-dreams of his greater namesake, and the Greek and Italian model of Swinburne, sought among the perils in the city subject for reflection and exhortation. He endeavored to pass beyond Wordsworth in the idealization of the scenes of simple life, and to reap from fields the most prosaic a harvest of new and earnest poetry. In doing this, he has not unnaturally stooped to some of the lowest commonplaces of every-day life, in order to have in them an image of the heavenly life.

Now, there was, and still is, room for such a poet as this; for a poet, shall we say of the commonplace?—at any rate of the normal—who would throw new light upon the weariness of the more prosaic side of existence, and show that upon every kind of work attends its peculiar honor.

But Mr. Lewis Morris has failed, we think, to become a great poet, even of the commonplace; and in his failure to become great has succeeded in becoming popular. He has failed to become great because he has so little to tell us that is new; he has succeeded in becoming popular because he has so much to tell us that is old. Nevertheless, though we question the artistic value of Mr. Morris' verse, we believe that its purely utilitarian value has been quite considerable. He has not enriched art, but he has helped life; he has lived and written with a real influence upon the wide class of readers that have bestowed upon him a popularity greater than the poetic worth of his writing would warrant.

Mr. Lewis Morris can never claim to be widely representative, to have reflected the current thought of his age, as Byron or Wordsworth, as Shelley or Tennyson have done. That is denied him. But one phase of thought he has represented, and represented with honor. He was born into an age of scepticism, when the air was full of theories of evolution and troubled with the clouds of positivism, and he raised his voice against a philosophy which tends to blind its followers to the one ideal light of the world. In the midst of a dark world Mr. Lewis Morris raises the lamp of religion. "The Wanderer," one of the best of his poems; "The New Creed," "Evensong," "Confession," and innumerable shorter verses, all breathe the spirit of resignation to a will higher than man's, and a knowledge above the learning of the ages. His voice is not of science rebuking science, not always of higher knowledge silencing lower, nor can he always give us a sound reason for the faith that is in him. But as the poet of the religion of our fathers, protesting against the attacks launched on the old hopes and creeds by the younger sons of the household, he has spoken, and spoken not in vain. For, above all things, he is full of that sincerity which Carlyle considered indispensable to true greatness. The very determination with which he forces his thought upon us is only another phase of his own belief in the truth of the gospel he comes to preach. And much may surely be forgiven the man who is genuinely sincere.

There are those whose learning is not deep, who find their faith tottering—they know not why—when they hear of new creeds and fresh philosophies; who do not seek arguments as much as assurances, nor proofs so much as exhortations. These are the readers, in themselves no inconsiderable number, who will rise strengthened by the poems of Mr. Lewis Morris. Readers will not leave his poems endowed with new knowledge and new wisdom, nor enriched with any undiscovered wealth of poetic thought; but many that have read him will feel a fresh comfort and consolation which they will not scorn to acknowledge, and for which, in the secrecy of their hearts, they will confess themselves thankful. —Murray's Magazine for February.

"The Jupiter of English Letters."

Some one has called Boswell's Ursa Major "the Jupiter of English letters with one satellite," which sounds very epigrammatic, but is not very true. The grand old primary planet of Bolt Court, who revolved about Fleet street and the Temple in the days of the early Georges, had more little stars in his train than the naked eye could see. Granting that James Boswell was the first satellite—a stellar body, by the way, which the astronomers describe as having no "sensible eccentricity"—how can the scientists ignore Tom Davies, Arthur Murphy, Topham Beauclerc, Bennet Langton, "Peter Pindar," Lucy Porter, Letitia Hawkins, Anna Williams, Charlotte Lenox, or Mrs. Thrale? If these were not Jupiter's moons, the whole planetary system is a delusion and a snare.

How much this literary Jupiter owes to his literary satellites, particularly to the first one, it is not easy, at this distance of time, to tell. But who reads his Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland in these days? How often is his Dictionary consulted? What influence has his Rambler upon modern letters? Which sweet girl graduate or cultivated Harvard "man" of to-day can quote a line from The Vanity of Human Wishes, or knows whether that production is in prose or verse? What would the world have thought of Samuel Johnson at the end of a hundred years if a silly little Scottish laird had not made a hero of him, to be worshipped as no literary man was ever worshipped before or since, and if he had not written a biography of him which is the best in any language, and the model for all others?

Mr. Croker in his preface calls attention to the curious fact that Boswell's personal intercourse with Johnson was exceedingly infrequent and limited, a fact which is very apt to be overlooked even by the more careful readers of the Life. They first met about twenty years before Johnson's death; and after that meeting Boswell was not in England more than a dozen times. Mr. Croker even counted the days they were together in London, as well as during the visits to Edinburgh and the tour of the Hebrides, and shows them to have been but two hundred and seventy-six in all; so that this marvellous biography, with its minuteness of detail, its small talk and gossip, its wise and foolish disclosures, is the result of but nine months of actual observation of its subject by its author. Were nine months ever so profitably and so industriously employed?—From "Literary Landmarks of Edinburgh," by Laurence Hutton, in Harper's Magazine for March.

Where Burns and Scott Met.

One of the most interesting of all the literary landmarks of Edinburgh, naturally, is the house in which Burns and Scott met for the first and only time. The story has been often told by Scott himself, and by others who were present, and is familiar to all admirers of both poets; but the question of the identity of the house has been the subject of much discussion among the local historians and antiquarians for many years. That it was the house of Professor Adam Ferguson there is no doubt, but as to where the professor at that time lived the doctors differ. In Peter Williamson's Edinburgh Directory of 1786-8, his address is given as Argyle Square—which was near the University, and which disappeared on the construction of Chambers street—and this fact led to the inference that the interview must have occurred in that place, as Burns was in Edinburgh during the winter of '86-7. But Scott himself speaks of Ferguson as living in an insulated house some distance from the town (Argyle Square was almost in the heart of the city); in a biographical sketch of Ferguson, printed in The Transactions of the Edinburg Royal Society (1761-4), the writer says he lived at that time "in a suburb called the Sciennes". Henry Cockburn in his Memorials says, "Old Adam Ferguson lived just east of my father's house," which would point clearly to the neighborhood of the Sciennes; and to crown all, Mr. Archibald Munro, in a letter to one of the Edinburgh papers published about ten years ago, says he found a printed record in the Register office showing that Professor Ferguson disposed of his house in Argyle Square on the 3d of October, 1786—almost two months before Burns arrived in town—and that he got possession of Sciennes House on the 11th of October of the same year. This must surely settle the question of locality. Certain antiquaries assert that the stone cottage now called Alice Villa, and numbered 2, Sciene Hill, was Ferguson's home—a claim which neither the size nor the modern construction of the house would seem to warrant. So that the old building, or what is left of it, still known as Sciennes House, certainly appears to have been

"The spot
Where Bobbie Burns ordained Sir Walter Scott."

It stands on the north side of Braid's Place—which is not numbered—two doors from the street called "The Sciennes." The present front, entirely rebuilt, was the back of the house occupied by Ferguson. The original front, still remaining in part, looked out upon its own grounds, now a paved yard full of children and of drying clothes. This front is not visible from the streets about it, and the fact of its existence is comparatively unknown even to the inhabitants of its own immediate neighborhood. Sciennes House in its day must have been an imposing mansion. It has four windows in breadth, and is three stories high; on its roof is a balustrade, and groups of flowers and fruits carved in stone are still to be seen upon it.

The names Sciennes, by the way, is derived from the old Convent of St. Katherine of Siena, which once stood near by, and the word as pronounced in the local vernacular as if spelled "Sheens." The fact that all of these points are now for the first time established and made public must be the excuse for the devotion of so much space to this particular matter.—From "Literary Landmarks of Edinburgh," by Laurence Hutton, in Harper's Magazine for March.

Literary Notes.

The literature of dramatic belles-lettres, says the Spectator, contains few volumes that can compare in attractiveness with the delightful autobiography of Joseph Jefferson. "Most actors, when they come to wield the pen, find it hard to avoid occasional lapses into the stilted style of the hero of melodrama. But, happily, there is hardly a trace of that in these memoirs."

N. D. C. Hodges will publish directly "The Labrador Coast: A Journal of Two Summer Cruises to that Region," by Professor Alpheus S. Packard. The work will contain notes on the early discovery of Labrador, its Eskimo inhabitants, physical features, fauna, etc., and a bibliography of works and charts pertaining to the civil and natural history of the peninsula. It will be illustrated.

Mr. Herbert Spencer is about to publish an entirely new edition, in three octavo volumes, of his "Essays, Political, Scientific and Speculative." It will contain many new essays not included in the previous editions. On the list of books soon to appear from the press of D. Appleton & Co. is "A Plea for Liberty," an English work comprising essays by various writers, edited by Thomas Mackay, with an introduction by Mr. Spencer.

The course of lectures which Mr. Edmund C. Stedman will give at Johns Hopkins in March deals with "The Nature and Elements of Poetry." The subject divisions include "Oracles, Old and New," "What is Poetry?" "Creative Poetry and the Poetry of Self-Expression," "Beauty," "Truth," "Imagination—Passion" and "The Faculty Divine." Those who cannot listen to these lectures will doubtless anticipate eagerly their appearance in book form.

Just at the moment General Sherman died Charles L. Webster & Co. were ready to publish the new edition of his memoirs. It is the third edition, revised and corrected by the General himself, and appears, as before, in two stout octavos, with an engraving after Sherman's photograph in Vol. I. It contains the two appendixes with criticisms from other officers, and the letters brought out by the first edition from a host of native and foreign authorities. Portraits of Generals Thomas, Schofield and McPherson embellish Vol. II. The work appeared first in 1875.

Macmillan & Co. make the very interesting announcement that they will shortly publish the "Oxford Movement: Twelve Years, 1833-1845," by the late Dean Church. This is a volume based upon Dean Church's personal recollections, and will follow the course of the movement from its first public beginning to the secession of Dr. Newman. The "character sketches" of Newman, Keble, Hurrell Froude, Ward, and others that are promised will be eagerly looked for by many. Material for a history of the Oxford movement is now rapidly accumulating, and none is likely to be more valuable than Dean Church's book will be.

In these times less than ten in a hundred of the novels written by women are ever printed, according to a publisher, who added: "We send back every month to authoresses piles of manuscript of novels that have been mailed to us." In looking over a catalogue of recent publications I notice that women are now giving us very many books that are not novels, says the New York Sun. Here among them in this catalogue are works of erudition and research, works in history and biography, in the physical sciences and the fine arts, in speculation, and in pure letters. Let us rejoice over these promises of the intellectual development of our race.

A QUEEN'S SNOW-BALLING LARK.

Little Wilhelmina's Spirited Acceptance of a Challenge.

A charming story, which is well authenticated, comes from The Hague. Every afternoon Queen Wilhelmina, generally accompanied by her mother, goes for a long drive in a sleigh drawn by a couple of ponies. They are unattended, and there is nothing about the equipage to distinguish it from hundreds of others of a similar character.

A few days ago the excursion was extended to a village a few miles from the capital, which was reached just as the girls from the school were released from their studies and were enjoying a game of snow-ball. At the earnest request of the little Queen a halt was made in order that she might witness the fun. Either by accident or design a snow-ball thrown by one of the children struck the Queen on the arm.

In a moment, and before her mother could remonstrate, little Wilhelmina was out of the sleigh, and grasped a handful of snow, and was busily pelting the children nearest to her. The Queen Regent laughed good-naturedly, but soon persuaded her charge to enter the sleigh, which soon drove on.

It was only a day or two afterward that the incident leaked out, and the mistress of the school received a big basket of toys for distribution among the children, with a charming little card of New Year greeting, signed "Wilhelmina."

Our religion purifies language. Its weapons are powerful, but they are not carnal. Whatever justification a Christian may have for defending himself, or even for chastising a violent opposer, he will not do it as a bully, nor talk about it in the style of the sons of Belial.

FOR THE YOUNG FOLKS.

FACTS AND FANCIES LIKELY TO PLEASE THEM.

A Magic Plant Which Has Been Much Written About by the English Poets—Birds Lost in the Fog—They Get Bewildered and Make for the Nearest Light.

It is to be doubted whether any better instance could be found of the wealth of tradition, legend and story that centers in a single little plant than that which has accumulated round the mandrake. It has a literature all to itself, and learning seems to have exhausted itself over its etymology. The plant itself is so insignificant that it would not naturally excite any great interest. Its leaves are long, sharp-pointed, and hairy, rising immediately from the ground, and are of a vivid dark green. Its flowers are dingy white, stained with veins of purple, and its fruit of a pale orange, about the size of a nutmeg. The root is spindled-shaped, often divided into two or three forks, and rudely resembles the human form, from which possibly it takes its name. But if we turn from the plant itself to the monument of learning that has been erected around it, it is impossible not to be struck with the universal interest it has possessed for all people and in all ages. We do not know how many Shakespearean commentators have puzzled over the allusion in Juliet's immortal soliloquy:

And shrieks like mandrakes torn out of the earth,
That living mortals hearing them run mad:

and contrasted it with the parallel apostrophe of Suffolk in "King Henry VI.," who, asked by Queen Margaret whether he has not spirit to curse his enemies, replies:

Would curses kill, as doth the mandrake's groan,
I would invent as bitter, searching terms,
As curst, as harsh, as horrible to hear.

As the legend runs, in order to procure the magic plant it was necessary to cut away all the suckers to the main root before pulling it up, which would cause death to any man or creature who heard the human scream it made. They had an ingenious if cowardly way of getting over the difficulty, which would certainly not commend itself nowadays to the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. After carefully stopping their ears, they took a dog and tied its tail securely to the plant, and then walking away to a short distance called the dog to follow. In doing this the luckless animal would pull up the much-coveted root, but would fall dead upon the spot. This was, at any rate, according to Josephus, the old Jewish practice; but the tradition, at least, long survived. Whatever may be the origin for the theory that the root shrieked or groaned when separated from the earth, it certainly remained a current tradition long after Shakespeare immortalized it. Since, however, the root is named from its imaginary resemblence to the human figure, it is not unnatural to suppose that it may have been credited with possessing some of the attributes of human feeling. Langhorne, in the latter part of the eighteenth century, tells us to

Mark how that rooted mandrake wears
His human feet, his human hands.

Among its names in this connection are those of the "Devil's Food" and the "Devil's Apple," the "Tuphach el Sheitan" of the Arabs. That this uncanny belief continued down to almost modern times, is shown by an anecdote for which Madame du Noyer is responsible. According to this, on the murder of the Marechal de Fabert in 1662, which was popularly attributed to his having broken a compact with the devil, two mandrakes of extraordinary beauty were found by his friends in his rooms, and these were regarded as conclusive proofs of the diabolical league, of which they failed to find, as they hoped, any written record. It has always been in great vogue in the East, both Jews and Arabs having from time immemorial also valued it for the magic virtues which were so long commonly attached to a love-philter. This attribute, which dates at least from the Old Testament times, remained current in Italy until the Middle Ages; for there are plenty of records showing that there was a brisk demand for the root among the Italian ladies. Perhaps the most extraordinary of the properties attributed to it are those which it shared in common with the Rastrivtrava of Russia, of enabling house-breakers to pick locks, which is certainly one of the most amusing developments of the solar theory. "Love," it is said, "laughs at locksmiths;" but the connection between the mandrake and "burgling" seems a little forced. There is a tradition that the moonwort will unshoe horses if they step upon the plant, and similar powers have been attributed to the vervain and the mandrake.—Chamber's Journal.

Birds Lost in the Fog.

It was at Moor Allerton, near Leeds, a village which stands on a high hill, crowned by a large wood. By the road near the wood stood one or two of what were then the last gas lamps of the town. Though it was not late in the afternoon, the fog was so thick that these were lighted, and around one of them was flying a large bird, either a wood pigeon or a stock dove, which had probably lost its way, as it was making for the wood and was helplessly flying around the twinkling light. It continued to do so as long as the writer cared to wait, but must have gone on later, as it had disappeared when he returned.

Wild geese, which, like the wood pigeons, are most wary birds, often become very tame, and even bewildered, in a fog. St. John used to shoot them easily in the Bay of Findhorn in such weather, waiting till they flew inland, when they would come cackling just over his head. But the oddest story of geese in the fog comes from Norfolk, and was told to Mr. Stevenson, the author of "The Birds of Norfolk," by Rev. H. T. Frere. A large flock of geese were attracted to the town of Diss on a foggy night by the lights, and from the sound of their voices seemed to fly scarcely higher than the tops of the houses. They came about 7 P. M., and, as it was Sunday evening, they appeared to be especially attracted by the lights in the church, and their incessant clamor not a little disturbed the congregation assembled for evening service.

From that time until 2 A. M., when the fog cleared off and they departed, they continued to fly round and round, utterly bewildered. One bird happened to fly so low as to strike a gas lamp outside the town—probably, like the pigeon at Leeds, it was flying round the light—just as a policeman was passing by, who, very properly, as the bird was making a great noise outside a public house, took it into custody, and the next day it was with equal propriety sent off to a private lunatic asylum at Melton, where it lived for some years an honored guest.

Rooks and partridges do not seem to alter their habits in the fog so much as other birds that seek their living in the open country.

Partridges are, if anything, wilder than ever, and if the rooks keep nearer home than usual, they by no means refuse to fly; their wings make a great noise in the silence of the fog, and often the first notice of their presence is the flapping of the damp wings as they make off suddenly before the unwelcome presence of man. But all other wild birds keep still and moping till the darkness goes. The deprivation of light, which affects all animals so much, is particularly depressing to birds, and this may be another reason for their unwillingness to move in the frost fog. Naturally they are the first to welcome its departure. As the mist lifts from a Scotch hillside the cock grouse begin to crow, and in the English fields the rooks caw, the small birds twitter and the cocks crow in the barn-yards. These sounds are as certain to proclaim the lifting of the fog as the "London cries" to begin when the rain stops.—London Spectator.

Preparing the Mail.

A collection of the letters from the boxes is made by the carriers in large cities and towns at stated hours, and they are taken to the central office or to designated branch stations. In smaller places they are mailed directly at the office. If the office is large enough to require a number of clerks, one is detailed for the work of getting the mail ready for dispatch, and is called the mailing clerk. The table at which he works is called the mailing table, and is raised so high from the floor that he can work comfortably at it while standing. The back edge is usually a few inches higher, so that the top will incline toward the person at work, and into the table is set, so as to be even with the top, a large piece of rubber an inch or more in thickness.

On the table beside this lie the canceling stamp and ink pad. The Government requires that the stamp be of metal and the ink black and indelible, but this rule is sometimes broken in small country offices by the use of rubber stamps and colored inks. The Government furnishes all necessary stamps and ink, and the only excuse for not following the rule is that where there are few letters the rubber stamp and common ink may be more convenient. The penalty for removing the cancellation from a stamp and using the stamp again is imprisonment for from six to three years, or a fine from $100 to $500.

The letters and postal cards taken from the box are arranged in piles, all right side up; and the mailing clerk, placing a pile of them on the table in front of him, cancels them with almost incredible rapidity, sliding each piece, before he strikes it, upon the rubber in the table, thus securing a good impression of the stamp, and a slight rebound to aid the next stroke.—February St. Nicholas.

The Squirrel's Home.

Under certain conditions, if a city boy were visiting his country cousin in midwinter, and the latter should say, "Let us go to the woods and get some nuts," the city youth would probably suspect an attempt to perpetrate a rural joke. But country boys are apt to know some things that city boys never dreamed of. Now if the two boys should tramp through the snow to the woods, say in a woodland district of Pennsylvania, the country boy would be on the lookout for an old oak or hickory tree. He might travel a great distance before finding one that would exactly suit his fancy. At last, however, he would stop at the root of a big tree and walk around it. He would probably find a hole at the root, on one side, caused by decay, and partly filled with rotten particles that had fallen from the inside.

The boy would then get down on his knees and begin to scoop out this stuff. If he were lucky he would soon astonish his city cousin by pulling out a handful of the rotted wood, in which there would appear a number of big, plump chestnuts. And going farther, he might find a peck of chestnuts, hickory nuts, walnuts or butternuts. And there would not be either a worm-eaten or "deaf" one in the whole collection.

The nuts were hidden there by a pair of squirrels the preceding autumn and the squirrel is such a perfect judge of nuts that a bad one never passes his inspection. Give a tame squirrel a walnut, for instance. The nut to you seems to be perfect. The squirrel may quickly drop it and say to you, in squirrel language, "please give me a good one." Then break the discarded nut and you will learn what the squirrel knew at once, that it was worthless.

Squirrels do not hibernate in winter. In the early days of our country they used to migrate to the South in autumn and come back in the spring. They would travel in vast armies, sometimes swimming wide rivers in their journeys, although they are not very good swimmers. But farms, relatively dense population and the omnipresent shotgun now oblige the few squirrels that are left to house up at home in winter. Hence they must lay in their winter supplies in autumn, and this they do by hoarding nuts in trunks of old trees.

The little squirrels are born late in the autumn but they stay with the old folks till the following spring. By that time they are nearly full grown, and are competent to take care of themselves. The squirrel nest is itself an evidence of the love of the old ones for their young. The inside of it is made of the softest materials the happy pair can find, and the female will even pluck bits of her own fur with which to give the finishing touches to the dainty home for the little ones.

Nearly everybody has seen the squirrel in the act of boring into a nut, but did you ever stop to think why it is his teeth don't become dull by this constant use? The finest steel or the hardest flint would dull and wear away with such use as the squirrel makes of his teeth. Here is the explanation: The squirrel has two long and sharp teeth in the front of each jaw. It has no canine teeth, and there is considerable space between the incisors and the molars, thus giving free action to the cutters. The incisors, which are always growing as fast as they wear off, have a strange formation, which keeps them always as sharp as knives. The enamel on the outside of the teeth is much harder than the ivory part, and hence, as the teeth wear, the enamel always projects a little beyond the body of the tooth.

This provision of nature makes it unnecessary for the squirrel to use either a file or a grindstone in order to keep his cutting instruments in good order. It seems cruel, of course, for boys to rob squirrels of the food they have hoarded, but it is thoughtlessness rather than conscious cruelty that impels the average boy. And then again, the farmer is not inclined to lavish much sympathy on the squirrel. Where the little animals are numerous they make havoc in the farmer's cornfield. In Pennsylvania the squirrels used to be so destructive that rewards were offered by law for their heads, and in 1749 the State paid for the killing of 640,000 of them.

When Snow-Flakes Fly.

I think that every season brings
To every boy some pleasant things,
While many choose the summer, I
Prefer the time when snow-flakes fly.

What fun it is to hurry out,
Clad in my thickest "roundabout,"
To take my sled and climb the hill
Above the clatter of the mill,
Where toils the miller hour by hour,
His hat and clothes as white as flour.
There do I meet the other boys,
And no one scolds us for our noise.
All in a line we downward go
Across the race-course of the snow;
Our steel-shod steeds they never tire,
And never have to seek the fire;
Though sometimes, when the north wind blows,
We have to warm our ears and toes.
Although of coasting I am fond,
I love to skate upon the pond,
To have a game of "tag," or play
At "prisoner's goal" and "pull away,"
Or out of broken branch and twig
And reeds to build a bonfire big.
But no one finds it very nice
To tumble down upon the ice,
For, if you chance to hit your head,
It seems as though you must be dead,
And carried to some land on high
Among the stars up in the sky,
Since stars and stars are all you see,
And it gets dark as dark can be.

Some boys like summer best, but I
Prefer the time when snow-flakes fly!
—Harper's Young People.

A MILLION GHOSTLY RABBITS.

Hunters Who Say They Saw a Graveyard Full of Spectral Animals.

Two well-known young men engaged in business in Bluntsville, Ala., were badly frightened a few nights ago by a graveyard rabbit. They had been discussing the superstition of carrying the left hind foot of a graveyard rabbit for good luck, and both agreed to give it a trial if they could obtain a foot. They learned that plenty of rabbits could be found about the big cemetery at Mount Hope church, four miles from town.

The following night they went to the graveyard, each armed with a small shotgun. Several times they crept cautiously through the graveyard, and had almost reached the conclusion that the rabbits were not at home that night, when they caught sight of one sitting on a grave. It was a bright moonlight night, and nothing seemed easier than to hit that rabbit. A shot was fired, but the little animal did not turn up his toes as the hunters expected. Instead, he only turned his face toward the two men and seemed to look at them with an expression of reproach. Another shot was fired, and still the rabbit lived. Then both men fired together, but without effect. They loaded and fired again, and then the rabbit seemed to suddenly turn as white as the moonlight around him.

By this time the two hunters were getting a little nervous, and remembered the stories they often heard in their boyhood days of witches in the form of white rabbits. But they were after the left hind foot of a graveyard rabbit, and were not going to give up this chance of securing one just yet. Again the guns blazed, and this time the rabbit began to jump about in a circle and utter a low whine. In a moment the two hunters saw white rabbits in all directions. Every grave in the cemetery seemed to be covered with them, and they were all hopping around in circles, uttering low, plaintive cries. The two men leaped the fence and ran all the way home. They still insist they saw millions of rabbits in the graveyard that night, but the boys about town say the tonic they drank to steady their nerves was loaded.—St. Louis Globe-Democrat.